

THE  
GREAT LAW  
OF  
NATURE,

OR  
SELF-PRESERVATION,  
Examined, Asserted, and  
Vindicated from  
*Mr. Hobbes his Abuses.*

In a small  
DISCOURSE;  
Part *Moral*, part *Political*, and  
part *Religious*.

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TO THE  
READER.

READER;

**T**His small Treatise was writ two or three years ago, and since hath remain'd in the hands of some friends, till now at last I have adventured it to censure. It is chiefly the result of a few serious thoughts upon consideration of some of M. Hobbes his strange Tenents, which he would seem to ground upon that Great Law of Nature,

A. 2

**To the Reader.**

ture, Self-preservation; whereby, in the judgment of the world, he takes away all Foundations of Virtue and Goodness: yet is he well approved of by many, who would be thought like him, Great Wits, and to have Understandings and Capacities much transcending the Doctrine and Pedantry of Moralists and Divines.

Knowing therefore with whom I have to do, I have argued chiefly out of Master Hobbes his own Principles, and thereby endeavoured to evince the grossness and folly of his Errors, in making  
all

## To the Reader.

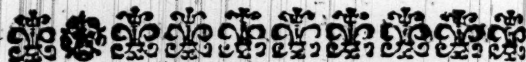
all Justice, Honesty, Morality, Goodness and Vertue, the consequences only of a Civil Government; as if, where there were no Civil Magistrate, these things had no being; and where there is a Civil Magistrate, took their measures only from his Mouth: So that whatsoever he pleases to call Good, Just, Honest, Vertuous, must therefore only necessarily be so; and whatsoever he pronounces Evil, Unjust, Dishonest and Vicious, immediately, for the same reason, is become so to all his Subjects: And these Enormous Tenents

## To the Reader.

he pretends to deduce and ground upon his Definition of the Right of Nature, and the Great Law of Self-preservation. This shameful abuse both of God, and Nature, and all that dare pretend to any thing of real goodness and vertue, I have endeavoured to detect and confute out of his own granted Principles: which whether I have effected, I must leave to thy judgment: And doubt not, but Truth and Reason will prevail at length with the Intelligent and Rational: And that they may so do with all, I have linked them

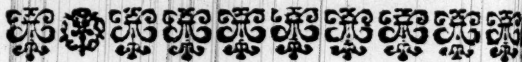
## To the Reader.

them also with Interest; being assured thereby, to leave none that love themselves unconcerned in the matter of the subsequent Discourse, and out of the reach of the arguments and reasons thereof, according to the best of my understanding.



# ERRATA.

Page 11. l. 19. for *non*, read *man*; page 86  
l. 20, 21. blot out this whole sentence, viz  
if others will interpose, let it be at their perils



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THE  
Great Law of NATURE,  
OR  
SELF-PRESERVATION,  
EXAMINED.



That the Notions or Laws of Right and Wrong, Just and Unjust, Good and Evil, are independent upon, and naturally and rationally antecedent to the Constitution of any Commonwealth, or Civil Government, and are binding or obligatory to all men, both in the state of Nature, and in all Political Government; proved out of Mr. *Hobbes* his own Principles of *Self-Preservation*, and equality amongst men.

2. From the Nature of God; with a subsequent Discourse, shewing the unreasonableness of that Tyrannical and Arbitrary Government, seeming to be



vindicated, and held necessary by the same Author in his said Book: with another light reflection upon the Justice and Reasonableness, or rather the Injustice and Unreasonableness of their Demands, who in any Civil Government will challenge to themselves Liberty of Conscience, or a publick free exercise of what Religion they best fancy; being all grounded upon the same Principles of *Self-preservation*.

And because the greatest part of these fore-mentioned Errours seem to be deduced from Mr. *Hobbes* his definition of the Right of Nature, I will first begin with that.

By the way requiring one thing only to be granted, *viz.* That Right Reason is to be the Law and Rule of all our actions. By Right Reason, I do not mean as Mr. *Hobbes*, *De Cive*, pag. 21. every mans private Reason; for who but himself did ever call this Right Reason? but I mean what is commonly hereby meant, an unerring Reason, or that which proceeds always upon true Principles, and thence deduces true Consequences and Conclusions.

Mr.





rence guilty of a most notorious Error, viz. that it is therefore a liberty that each man hath of doing any thing which in his own judgment and reason he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereto; for in his own judgment and reason, he may, and often doth conceive that the aptest means thereto, which *revera* is not, but rather quite contrary to it, and the aptest and readiest means to bring him to destruction; of which infinite examples might be produced, and every mans daily experience confirms this for a most undeniable truth.

And what rational man will pretend, that because he hath a right and liberty granted him by God or Nature, to preserve his own life, or another mans, will conclude, that hereby is intended to him a Grant of a Right and Liberty to destroy himself, or another?

Now according to the definition it self, the Right of Nature is only a liberty that each man hath to use his power for his own preservation, not his own destruction; for this should be really to infringe the Law of Nature and Reason,

Reason, to the breach of which no rational man will ever pretend to any Right, which commands Self-preservation: and this is meant, I suppose, of a real preservation, not a seeming or intentional only; therefore the means, in order to this end, ought to be really and truly, and not only seemingly and intentionally (in the party acting) conducing to the end; otherwise the Law of Nature will *re vera*, really and truly be broken, contrary to designe and appearance: for seeing that this is the great Law of Nature and Reason, *viz.* Self-preservation; to act that which is really and truly contrary to this Law, must needs be a breach thereof, though the man so acting may be so far in an error, as not to think the action to be so destructive to the end he aims at as it is: And therefore I affirm, that though a mans own judgment and reason prompt him to do a thing as seeming to him the aptest means to secure this end of Self-preservation, which thing really and truly is not according to the rule of right reason the aptest and most probable means to attain this end aforesaid,

this man is guilty of misusing that liberty given him, guilty of transgressing the rule of right reason, which obliges all men, at all times, in all places; and guilty of acting that which is absolutely contrary and prejudicial to his own preservation, the end and designe of his actions: nor ~~is~~ excusable, because he did that which to himself seemed most conducing to the end; for as in Civil Government, ignorance of the Law is no good Plea to excuse and justifie, though it may somewhat extenuate a Crime in some cases; so in *statu-nature*, error, ignorance or passion, cannot excuse and justifie those actions which are really contrary to right reason, or that principle of Self-preservation. And seeing each man desires to justifie his actions by right reason, and chiefly of all other things, desires, intends and indeavours Self-preservation; each man hereby implies, and doth acknowledge, that every act contrary to right reason, & this Principle of Self-preservation, is folly, which he condemns; though if you come to urge him with a particular case of his own, ignorance, partiality and pride,

pride, ( because he would seem no less wise then he ought to be ) may make him indeavour to justifie his own actions with a gloss of reason , though really, and in themselves, irrational, and destructive to the end he aims at. Now because no man is absolute Master of right reason , it follows, that all men are guilty of transgressing the Laws thereof , amongst which Self-preservation is a Chief ; and this frail condition of man is agreeable to the Lessons taught by the Divine Law-givers, viz. That man is born in sin , and under an unavoidable necessity of sinning, as he is in the state of Nature ; because he is not always able to regulate all his actions according to the exact Rules of right reason.

It it be objected , That if we grant Self-preservation a constant Rule and Maxime of right reason , a man in *statu nature* not knowing but every one he meets may have an intent to kill him, ought, according to the rule of this reason, to prevent the danger if he can, by killing the other first , or reducing him into a condition not to be able to do him

any prejudice, and this act shall be good and just, because rational, and so by consequence all other inferior acts of hostility; therefore no active and positive justice and injustice, good and evil, in *statu naturæ*.

To this I answer, That if such act or acts be really and truly most conducing to the end of Self-preservation, we will *disputandi gratia* suppose them good and just, or not evil or unjust. And to try this, let us examine them according to the Principles of Equality and Self-preservation agreed to by the *Hobbists*: As first, That Nature hath made men equal in power; if therefore you go about to take away the Life of any man, there is as much reason and probability to suspect he may take away yours, as you his; and so if you attempt to take away from him any other thing that he hath right to: Therefore whensoever you attempt any such act, consider, that by reason of the equality that is betwixt you naturally, you do, as it were, upon even terms, throw Dice for your Life. But this is not all: suppose you conquer and kill, yet doth there rest as many such

such Battels to be fought by you, as you shall finde men in the World; for the same reason which bids you suspect one, and fight him, bids you suspect all; so that you are to throw Dice (as it were) for your Life, not once, but a hundred, thousand times: And were it not rather Madness, then Reason, to suppose that you shall win every throw? And if you imagine your self to have a little more craft in the Game you are to play then another, so as by cunning, skill, strength, confederacy, deceit, surprizal, &c. you may conceive more hopes of prevailing then another, you impugn the Principle of Equality already allowed; the same hopes, for the same reasons, and all the same advantages, being common to others, and your self lying as obnoxious to them, as they to you; and you may expect to meet with as cunning Gamblers as your self, and to be caught upon the same odds, surprizals and disadvantages. By this it appears, that even in the state of Nature, such attempts to take away the Lite or the right of another man, are not according to right reason, and regulated



by the well-weighed rules of Self-preservation : But to kill, *se defendendo*, all Laws adjudge just and allowable. To sum up in short what I have said , I affirm, That

For a man to do that which is destructive to his own Life and happiness, is against the Right and Law of Nature and Reason :

But for a man to do any thing , or every thing, which in his own judgment and reason he shall conceive to be the aptest means for the preservation of his own Life , oft-times is to do that which is destructive to his own Life and Happiness : *Ergo*

For a man to do any thing , or every thing, which in his own judgment and reason he shall conceive to be the aptest means for the preservation of his own Life, is oft-times against the Right and Law of Nature and Reason , and no man can have any Right by Nature to act contrary to these Laws.

The major needs no proof ; the minor is proved by all men , as often as by  
their



their own folly they bring mischief and destruction upon themselves, which when it is too late they commonly see, confess and condemn. Now though there be a necessity of acting according to each mans private reason, right or wrong, and consequently of acting not seldom contrary to the principles of right reason and self-preservation, yet is every such act a failing or sin, and all men in some degrees guilty thereof: amongst whom they are most excusable, who endeavour most to finde out the true rules of right reason, and according to these rules to regulate their own private actings; they most culpable, who not attending to that more Noble principle, suffer themselves to be led by the brutish part of non-sense and passion only.

To give more light to what hath been said, and to examine more exactly the nature of right and wrong, good and evil, according to the granted principles of equality and self-preservation, let us consider the first of these according to Mr. *Hobbes* his Assumption, *Part 1. Cap. 3. of his Leviathan*, in these words,  
viz.

*viz. Nature hath made all men equal in the Faculties of the body and minde, as that though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker minde then another, yet when all is reckoned up together, the difference betwixt man and man is not so considerable, as that one can thereupon claim to himself any benefit to which another may not pretend as well as he. See Chartes in the beginning, De Methodo, to this purpose, as to the faculties of the minde, which only makes the man.*

Seeing therefore that all men are by Nature equal in power, and that measuring the power of each man, we shall measure his right and title to what he lays claim to (as he is in the state of Nature) which is adequate and proportionate to his power (according to Mr. *Hobbes* his Principles) the power of all men being equal by Nature, their right and title to all things they lay claim to must be also equal; and if their right and title be equal, then ought their share and parts to be equal in the said things; Nature in giving them equal power, declaring that they have equal  
right,

right, and ought to have equal portions thereof: Therefore though we agree with Mr. *Hobbes*, that every man in the state of Nature hath right to every thing; yet do we not agree, that this right extends to the whole thing if there be Competitors, but to a just and equal portion of it..

And from this Fundamental Thesis of Equality in Power amongst men in the state of Nature, before the Constitution of any Commonwealth, the rules men are to live by, in this state of Nature, may rationally be deduced: As for example, in those rules which are that part of the Moral Vertues which respect our Neighbours.

I. Seeing men are equal by Nature, one man ought not to take to himself a greater liberty in his actions, which respect or concern another man, then he is willing another man should in his actions which respect or concern him; for this would be an impugning the natural equality betwixt them, in abridging the power of his Fellow, and enlarging his own; and consequently the other, according to the rule of reason may, and there-

therefore it ought to be expected he will by force maintain and defend his own just rights. Hence the Rule of Justice and Equity, *Do not to others, what you would not they should do to you*: From which it is evident;

1. That no man ought to take that liberty over the person of another, as to affront, abuse, imprison, hurt or kill him, because he is not willing another should take the same liberty over him; and this branch of Justice concerns the person, and personal injuries.

2. One man ought not to endeavour to abridge another of that right he hath to all things equally with himself, because he is not willing he himself should be abridged in the same by another: And this is the second branch of Justice, which concerns the right and enjoyment of things appertaining to the person of each man.

II. Seeing men are equal by Nature, in the state of Nature, one man ought not to expect any greater service, as due to himself from another, then he thinks due from himself to another; for that were to abridge another mans liberty, in  
making

making him more a servant then his Fellow, contrary to the equality betwixt them; and therefore, according to reason, he ought to expect that the other will maintain and defend his just rights by force. Therefore seeing it is evident others are not obliged to do more for you, then you are obliged to do for others, *do unto others as you would they should do unto you*; Hence it follows, that we ought to think our selves obliged to do all good Offices for others upon every just occasion, because we desire and think the same due to our selves from others; and this is called Charity; and these two Vertues of Justice and Charity, are the grounds, and the foundation, and the very ligaments of all Humane Society; and all Covenants, or Pacts, express or implicate, whereby Commonwealths are constituted, or one man obliges himself to another, are binding as acts of natural Justice, which one man ought to observe towards another, according to the rules of reason, grounded upon Equality and Self-preservation; it being contrary to the rules of Justice for a man to infringe his faith  
and

and promise given to another, whereas he himself would not another should do so to him: And upon these two Laws of Justice and Charity, all other Moral Vertues, which respect our Neighbours, are grounded; and actions are esteemed vertuous or vicious, good or evil, as they are conformable or repugnant to these two Laws: As for example, to enumerate some particulars; Gratitude is a point of Justice in returning kindnesses received; for as you would expect that others should pay obligations of Gratitude to you upon occasion, so ought you to do to others: So sincerity in all your dealings and transactions with others is a point of Justice, because you desire others should deal sincerely with you: So to keep promise or Covenant; so of Mercy, where you have had just provocations, and suffered injuries; Charity bids you pardon, because you desire to be pardoned: All other Vertues, respecting our Neighbours, are easily reducible to the same Heads. Contrary to these Laws, and injurious to our Neighbours, are Pride; to arrogate to himself more than is due, and to put too high

high a value upon himself, and too low upon another, this is injustice : So of all kinde of wrong, as Theft, Murder, Reproaches, Affronts, Back-biting, Slandering, Lying, Malice, Envy, Hatred, Cheating, Dissembling, &c. no man being willing to suffer these things from another, therefore in Natural Justice he ought not to do them to another.

Now there is another sort of Vertue and Vice which hath no respect to our Neighbours, or not so much to them as to our selves ; and the measure of these, with their reasons and grounds, may be deduced only from the Law of Self-preservation : Such is Temperance in all things that concern our selves, as in eating, drinking, recreation, study, exercise either of the minde or body, &c. which actions are so far allowable, as they are consistent with Self-preservation, that is, the health of our bodies and mindes ; and if we exceed in them so far as to prejudice our health, we destroy our selves, and sin against Nature, or the Law of Self-preservation.

And as we have demonstrated that Justice, Charity and Temperance, with all  
their



their subordinate Species, do naturally result from the consideration of these two Maximes of Equality and Self-preservation, without any reference or dependance upon a Civil Power or Commonwealth; so also doth it appear of the notions of good and evil, which in a Moral sense are nothing else but Vertue and Vice; so that so long as men are men, viz. rational beings, and are acted and governed by reason, they must all necessarily agree in these Notions of good and evil; every vertuous action being denominated good, every vicious action evil. And hereby it appears, that these are not things meerly arbitrary, or dependant upon the mouth of the Prince, or the Constitution of a Civil Government; it being impossible that any Civil Power should make those actions, which in themselves are good, that is, conducing to the general happiness of mankind, as Justice, Charity and Temperance, to be evil; or those things which are evil, as Injustice, Uncharitableness, Intemperance, to be good, because always destructive to that happiness. Therefore these are not things dependant



dant upon the Constitution of a Commonwealth, or the mouth of the Civil Magistrate; but the Constitutions of all Civil Governments and Commonwealths are depending upon them, and if not framed according to them, must needs be ruinous and pernicious to as many as live under such Governments, or the greatest part of them; for without Natural Justice, Charity and Temperance, it is in vain to think any Civil Government can subsist, the designe of all Civil Government being the execution of these Laws, in order to Self-preservation; there being no need of any Civil Magistrate, if these Laws could be made to be observed without their help; nor doth any benefit accrew to any people from their Magistrate and Government, where these Laws and Rules are not observed; and to exempt the Prince from the observation of them, is to exempt the people, who are to obey him, and to reduce all things into a *Chaos*; for these being the Laws of Reason and Self-preservation, the non-observance of them is to act contrary to both, and the consequence destruction.

And

And that these Laws, even in *statu Naturæ*, do oblige in *foro conscientie*, viz. to a desire that they should take effect, Mr. *Hobbes* accords: If then they oblige to a desire, wheresoever the end be Self-preservation, and the actual exerting of that desire may consist together, they certainly oblige to actual performance; for whosoever is obliged to a desire that he might do a thing, is certainly obliged to do it, where he may do it with safety, especially where with benefit and advantage to himself and others.

Now that the actual performance of these Laws of Nature are always consistent with Self-preservation, is evident from what I have before shewn, viz. that they oblige only to do that, which according to the rules of right reason, is most conducing to that end, the actual performance whereof must needs be always requisite; and therefore to say they oblige only in *foro interno*, or to a desire, is as much as to say a man is obliged always to desire Self-preservation, but must not use the means to secure it.

And as for that Objection, That the  
practise

practise of Justice and Charity, in a state of Nature, is not the means to preserve our selves, because it would expose good men as a prey to the danger, lusts and passions of evil men, who would observe no such Laws in their dealing towards us:

To this I answer, That it is neither against the Law of Nature, nor Reason, for every man to stand upon his guard, to be as cautious as he can, and as jealous as he pleases, or sees cause, of those with whom he hath to deal, unless he be well acquainted with their disposition and temper: and it is very lawful for him to put himself in a condition to defend and preserve his own right, but in so doing, he must not prejudice others; for that were to provoke and pull those dangers upon himself, against which he desires to secure himself; for the Rule of Justice, *Do not to others what you would not others should do to you,* tells every man in the state of Nature, as hath been shewn) that he is not to injure another: And the same Rule tells us, that whosoever doth to us an injury, that person thereby declares, that he is willing

willing to be looked upon as an Enemy,  
 and must in reason and Justice expect a  
 like return of hostility: for he who doth  
 injuries, ought in Justice and Equity to  
 expect the same, and cannot complain  
 of injustice, if the party injured take  
 from him the power of doing him any  
 further injuries, even by taking away  
 his life, if in reason it appear he cannot  
 otherwise secure his own: But where  
 more gentle proceedings are likely to  
 take place, there the rigorous are always  
 to be avoided, because more dangerous  
 to our selves, and destructive to others:  
 So that though by the rigour of Justice  
 you may requite one injury with ano-  
 ther, yet according to the Rule of Cha-  
 rity, you are to suffer injuries, and do  
 good for evil, and forgive your Ene-  
 mies, because you desire when you of-  
 fend others in the like manner to be fa-  
 vourably dealt with, and forgiven your  
 self: besides, it is more safe to spare an  
 Enemy, then prosecute him with the ut-  
 most rigours, lest either he himself  
 should in a desperate condition make a  
 desperate a resistance, or some others  
 seeing your cruelty towards him, should

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my, serve you the same sauce, as with rea-  
 son is to be expected. You see therefore  
 these Laws of Nature, Justice and Cha-  
 rity, do not binde up our hands, and ex-  
 pose us to the abuses and injuries of o-  
 thers, but gives us liberty to use the  
 means, according to right reason, most  
 likely to secure us: But if we will  
 foolishly conceit, we cannot be safe un-  
 less we subdue all we see, and make  
 them our Vassals; or will upon every  
 slight injury, or weak surmise of an in-  
 tended injury, do a real one, this is not  
 according to the rule of right reason,  
 most conducing to our preservation, but  
 will certainly and suddenly, at some time  
 or other, be our destruction: Much less  
 can it be just and reasonable, where there  
 is no cause of fear nor danger from a  
 man, to abuse, rob, spoil, wound, hurt  
 or kill him.

Now though it be certain, that if men  
 would live according to the Laws of  
 Nature, I do not mean that Nature  
 which is common to man with Brutes,  
 but that which specifically constitutes  
 mans Nature, and distinguishes him  
 from other inferiour Creatures, viz.  
 Right

Right Reason, (for every one hath but so much of Man in him as he hath of Reason) they might live happily and securely, as in the Golden Age celebrated in the Fictions of the Poets of Old: yet because men are acted very much by the inferiour principles of appetite and passion, common also to the Beasts, which are always strong and vigorous in them, and because no man is absolute Master of Right Reason, nor are all men in equal degree Masters thereof; hence it is, that generally they are swayed by passion, blinded by ignorance, byassed by self-love, pride and conceit, or interest; which imperfections each man easily perceives, and takes notice of in others, but seldom can, or will see, or acknowledge in himself: So that though every man in the state of Nature should agree for quietness and securities sake, that each should have an equal share or proportion in all things, and equal services done as required of him, yet when these agreements come to be put in execution, they would not agree in their accounts and calculations of the individual and just measure to be assigned to each

each in particular; whence Contention, Strife and War arise. To avoid those mischiefs, and that each may enjoy what in Justice and Equity belongs to him without strife or danger, Reason advises them, as the only remedy, that they should chuse one or more to administer Justice, and to sit as sole Arbitrator of all Causes, and that they should unanimously agree to submit themselves to his or their judgment and determination in all their concerns, who is by mutual Covenant to see Justice impartially executed. But because such Judge or Judges so constituted cannot execute their charge without a Power able to force obedience in the disobedient and refractory; it is also necessary that all agree to give to such Judge or Judges, such Power as is necessary to bring Offenders to just punishment, and defend the Commonwealth from violence; and this Power is thus transferred to the Supreme Authority chosen, *viz.* by Promise, Covenant or Oath, express or implicit, to assist him or them with the hazard of life and estate, to the utmost of each

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mans power, in all things necessary for the executing Justice, and defence of the Commonwealth; of which necessity the Supreme Power to be Judge, and not the Subject: And this Supreme Power is not only to be Judge of what is just betwixt one of his Subjects and another, but also of what is just betwixt himself, and any of them, or all of them together; yet are not all his actions therefore just, nor any of them just, any further then they are conformable and consentaneous to the Law of Nature or Reason, whereby he is obliged to assume to himself no greater liberty of Command over his Subjects Persons and Estates, then is necessary for the accomplishing those ends for which he is constituted their Prince, viz. execution of Justice, and defence of the Commonwealth; and if he assume any greater, he is absolutely unjust, unless that liberty be granted to him by the general consent of the people: for though the people transfer to their Sovereign so much of their power and right as is necessary to execute Justice, yet this Authorizing him to be Judge,



Judge, and obliging themselves to adhere to his Decrees, doth not make those Decrees of his to be all just; for then were it impossible, in this sense, for any Judge or Arbitrator to do an act of injustice; which is contrary to what hath been already proved: and therefore we conclude, that when any Prince or Power in Authority Sovereign, acts contrary to the Laws of Nature, *viz.* Justice, &c. he doth wickedly and unreasonably, in regard such actions tend to the destruction both of himself and people, though for any such acts done, he is not accountable to any Earthly Power; for if you give his Subjects Authority to call him to account for his actions, you must suppose the Commonwealth dissolved in so doing, the Minister of Justice being disabled to execute his duty, because under check and restraint, and in the power of others. And thus far we have argued only upon those principles which Mr. *Hobbes* makes use of, and which are before the constitution of a Commonwealth, both *natura*, and *tempore*, *viz.* equality amongst men, and

self-preservation. And this I have done, and shall do, not because it is my own opinion that there are no other grounds or foundations of good and evil, but this Principle of Self-preservation and Equality; but to shew out of these Principles granted by Mr. *Hobbes*, that those Eternal Laws of Justice, Charity, Temperance, Reward, Vertue, &c. which he by the same Principles seems to destroy, or make the Daughters only of Civil Government, are the Mothers and the Foundation of it, and grounded in the very nature of man, so as to oblige him to act according to them, though there were no Civil Magistrate in the world, or though the Magistrate positively command the contrary.

Now Reason will dictate to us another Principle, from whence, and the same Rules of Equality and Self-preservation already laid down, the same things may be deduced and confirmed more strongly and effectually, *viz.* that Justice and Injustice, Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, are not consequents only of a Civil Government, so as to leave

no place for any Evasions to any man that will acknowledge that he ought to govern himself by the rules of reason: and this principle is, That there is a God; which may be proved, and is evident: 1. From the order of causes in the world, it being to every mans indifferent judgment, that hath any, apparent and clear, that there must be a first cause. 2. From the order and method of the Universe it self, and the admirable frame of it, and the Creatures therein; which shews that they were not the effects of Chance, but of some wise and skilful Architect. 3. From the general consent of all men in all Nations, and of the wisest men, and greatest Masters of Reason, that have been in the world: and that which the most part of all, and the most part of the wisest agree to, at least is most probably true. If therefore Reason tell us we ought to believe that there is a God, the first Cause, Creator, and Architect of the Universe; the same Reason will also tell us, that whatsoever perfection we perceive in our selves, or in the Universe

besides, we must conclude to be in the Creator and Giver in a far higher degree than in our selves, or the Creatures; for nothing can give to another what it hath not in it self: Let us therefore consider what things we esteem the greatest perfections and excellencies. Now above all others, we set the highest value upon Power; therefore in the first place we call God Omnipotent, and attribute to him all Power; and because Power without goodness may be idle or hurtful, as we finde by experience, in the second place we denominate him Good; which we see verified, in that he hath made use of his Power in creating us, and giving us whatsoever we have, that we can call good: and also because Power without Knowledge or Wisdom, may erre in its Operations; therefore, in the third place, we denominate God Wise, or Omniscient; and in these three Attributes, or Perfections, are contained all others; for he that hath Power, and is thereby able to do all things, and Wisdom, and thereby knows what is best to be done, and how best to do it;

it, being also Good, we are not to doubt, but that we are to expect from him all things that are the results of Power, Wisdom, and Goodness co-operating. Hence therefore you may conclude, that he is Eternal, True and Just; the Opposites of which, *viz.* Finite, False and Unjust, are all contrary to the Attributes of Omnipotent, Good and Omniscient. It being thus demonstrated, that every man, according to the Rule of Right Reason, must acknowledge that there is a God; and that this being supposed, we must necessarily believe, that he is owner of all Perfections; and that those Attributes afore-mentioned, *viz.* Omnipotency, Omniscieny, and Goodness, &c. are the greatest perfections, and therefore his; and we being all by the right of Creation and Dominion his Subjects, we ought, according to the rule of reason, to believe that he will do Justice to every one according to his Nature, and the Office of a Sovereign; and therefore we ought to be careful to live according to the Laws of Justice already by reason determined, which

command us , *not to do to others what we would that others should not do to us , and to do to others as we would that others should do to us* : For though we should , in acting contrary , foolishly hope to escape the ill consequences that we ought reasonably to expect we shall hereby draw upon our selves from the hands of men ; yet seeing there is no hope left to escape an Omnipotent and Omniscient Judge , the Rule of Self-love, or Self-preservation will command us, not to do those things, which if not most certainly , yet certainly most probably will bring evil and destruction upon us, from the hands either of God or men : And this is argument sufficient to determine the judgment and actions of all men that resigne themselves to the Government of Reason; and to those only I speak.

Now if any take notice that I have given a notion of God according to the notions that men have of perfection, whereas I should have given a notion of perfection according to the true notion and Attributes of God ; it being fitter to say, Whatsoever is in God is a  
per-

perfection absolute and universal, then to say, Whatsoever is amongst men a perfection, is a shadow or Character of God : I answer, seeing we can frame no other notion of God any otherwise, then by attributing to him whatsoever we esteem, according to reason, most excellent and perfect ; Hereby it appears, that it is the good pleasure of God that we should really believe him to be such as we have spoken him to be, it being most reasonable, we should think it his pleasure we should judge of all things, and therefore of him, according to those faculties he hath given us to judge by : which we have done. And seeing it is the will of God, we should really believe him to be such as our faculties declare to us, we ought also to believe, that he really in his own Nature and Essence is such, because the same faculties reasonably judge, that he is no deceiver, for that is an Attribute inconsistent with the former perfections that constitute his Nature.

And thus I have demonstrated, that every man ought to believe there is a God, that this God is good, and there-



fore just, seeing Justice (as we have shewn before) is good, and a good absolutely necessary, and most conducive to the good estate of the Universe; and therefore the presumption of him that does evil, and yet hopes to escape the hands of men, though it does, for the most part, bring him at one time or other to destruction, even by the hands of men, and is therefore unreasonable; yet the consideration of a God being also in the way, such presumption must be the greatest madness, and absolutely contrary to the Rules of Self-preservation, the Principles whereupon we have proceeded.

And seeing we have proceeded thus far upon these Principles of Self-preservation, and the Equality amongst men by Nature, as to deduce from thence the Laws men are to live by, and the Nature of Good and Evil, as to the Conceptions which man must necessarily, in respect of himself, frame thereof; and thereby made it appear, that Mr. *Hobbes* abuses and perverts his own Principles, in order to another small Discourse; we will declare  
more

more at large, not what Mr. *Hobbes* understands, but what in reason ought to be understood and meant by the word *Self-preservation*, lest any should conceive I intend no more thereby, then barely the preserving of life, or a *bene esse* in this life, which would injure the notion I think we ought to have of it, by a great mistake; for whatsoever Mr. *Hobbes* his Opinion is concerning *Self-preservation*, when he makes it the great Law of Nature, it is manifest to any indifferent judgment, that hereby ought to be intended, not only the preservation of life, or a *bene esse* in this life, but a general desire that necessarily and naturally is in every rational creature, whereby they wish to themselves happiness and satisfaction; which may properly be called *Philantia*, or self-love, or is grounded thereupon, and is infinite as desire, running parallel with Eternity it self: for every man doth not only naturally desire to preserve his life, or to live happily in this world, but to be for ever and eternally happy, freed from grievous objects, and conjoynd to pleasing

sing and desirable; and this I think undeniable: and hence it appears, that this *Philantia* is the Center upon which every mans actions move, and finally are determined and directed; it being impossible for any one indued with a rational soul, rationally and intelligently to desire to be miserable, or not to desire to be happy. This therefore being acknowledged for the great and necessary Law of Nature, it must of necessity be granted, as a consequence plainly deducible from hence, that that is always to be accounted best and most Eligible by each man, that conduces most to that particular mans real happiness; and that most of all to be accounted of by the Universal suffrage and consent of all men joyntly, that is most conducing to the benefit, happiness and satisfaction of all men: and it is easily visible upon the observation of the whole frame of the Universe, and the nature of man in particular, that if we submit to the judgment and dictates of right reason, each mans private happiness will be found linked together with, knit and united to the hap-

happinefs and felicity of the reſt of his  
 Fellows, as to this life; the greateſt  
 pleaſures whereof are found to conſiſt  
 in Society, and the benefits we have by  
 the mutual commerce, company and  
 injoyment of one another: And this  
 is the reaſon that people deſire to unite  
 themſelves in Commonwealths, and  
 under Civil or Politick Governments;  
 and a more powerful and effective rea-  
 ſon, I think, then that of fear, which  
 Mr. *Hobbes* ſeems only to inſiſt upon,  
 though I acknowledge them both to  
 be ſtrong motives. Now ſeeing that a  
 Civil Government, for the reaſons be-  
 fore alledged in our former diſcourſe,  
 and this laſt mentioned, is neceſſary, as  
 much conducing to the better and more  
 comfortable eſtate of mankind in this  
 life, the Diſpute will ariſe, what kinde  
 of Government is to be deſired, whe-  
 ther Monarchy, Ariſtocracy, or Demo-  
 cracy, the common Species talked of.  
 I ſay, that Government is moſt to be  
 deſired, which is moſt conducing to  
 the end for which it is deſired, which,  
 as hath been ſaid, is the ſafety and  
 more pleaſant comfortable living of  
 all

all the men in the world; and this, I think, no man can plausibly cavil at: Consider then which of these different Species of Government, last mentioned, do most conduce to this proposed end, viz. the general safety and comfortable living of all mankind, and not only of this or that particular person, or some sort of men; and I am much mistaken if any man will deliberately, proposing this end of Government, adjudge Mr. *Hobbes* his Monarchical Tyranny to be such; that is, for all men to submit their Lives, Estates, and all their Concerns, only to the will and pleasure of one Man, and he to be Sole Proprietor and lawful disposer of them all, without doing wrong or prejudice to any; nay, as it seems by his Principles, without possibility of doing any injustice, injury or evil: Such an absolute power in any one mans hand, is too great and unsafe, unless we could suppose him always the best of men, or little less then some Divinity. But suppose he be, or become Fool or Mad-man, or get some distemper in his brain, either by sickness,

ness, or any other accident, how shall such a one manage the Sword of Justice with an equal hand? his will and desire may be the same with *Caligula's*, that all the people of his Jurisdiction had but one Head, that he might cut them all off at one blow, or the like fumes of madness, melancholy or extravagancy: And certainly no man having the use of reason, whilst he sees and knows himself, and all his concerns in this life, subject to the will, humour, and extravagancy of such a one, can think he lives happily or comfortably, though he yet see the threatening dark storm fall besides himself. If it be urged, that if we do make a King, it is not possible to make him with a limited power, because if there be any other power in being that can check and controul him, that power is superiour to him, and therefore he but a subject to this: I answer, That he may have a power limited by the Rules of Natural Justice and Equity, which oblige all men, Kings and others, not to do wrong; and limited also by positive and National Laws, or express Cove-

Covenants, to which he may be obliged by Oath, Promise or Covenant ; and such a limitation I only mean, which is a sufficient Obligation and restraint to a good and just, or any reasonable and wise Prince.

In an Aristocratical Government, though there be not so much danger that all the Rulers may agree together to destroy or abuse their Subjects, yet doth self-ends and interest carry them very often upon projects and private designs, and beget Factions, dangerous and of fatal consequence to the Publick.

A Democratical Government is most difficult to be continued, some, notwithstanding all caution and care of prevention, growing more eminent and powerful then the rest ; and spurred by ambition, attempting the subversion or disturbance of the Government, and often, at last, grow too powerful for the Commonwealth, and change the face of the Democratical into a Monarchical Government, as in the Roman Commonwealth did *Cæsar*, &c.

To avoid the inconveniencies of each  
several



several Species, it is evident, that the well compounded Government, as that of *England*, is the best, under which it is most manifest that the people live the most happily, I mean all sorts and degrees, the Commons as well as the Lords, of any Nation in the world; where though there be one Monarch, and the Government resembling that applauded by *Mr. Hobbes*, yet doth he not pretend to that absolute arbitrary and unlimited power *Mr. Hobbes* would give his Prince; the Laws and Legislative Power being not solely posited in him, without the concurrence and consent of the People by their Representatives, though the Execution of them only be in the King, with other Royalties and Prerogatives, whereby he is sufficiently inabled to do Justice amongst his Subjects, and defend them against the strongest of his and their Enemies. And though it you respect absolute Power abstract from Justice, it is in the Kings to pervert these Laws established, at least as to the execution of them; yet with Justice he cannot do it, nor without imminent danger to

to himself and his people : for though Subjects ought not to take upon them to oppose and resist their Princes actions, whether just or unjust, as hath been said, otherwise then by Petition, or refusing to be the Ministers of these unjust Commands ; and such Doctrine they ought to be well instructed in with the reasons thereof ; yet is it very difficult to impose this belief upon men, for each man naturally thinks himself concern'd, as a Subject, to a higher Prince then any upon earth, viz. the God and Creator of all things, to maintain and uphold the Eternal Laws of that King of Kings ; so that where a Prince, the greatest in the world, doth an act of apparent wrong and injustice, or which is so construed and apprehended, all parties so understanding and apprehending it, do thereby conceive the Majesty of that greatest King offended ; and consequently, considering also the case to be of a general concernment, and may be their own, they desire and wish to see such irregularities(as they conceive them) reformed, and thereupon often ingage in

the quarrel unadvisedly and precipitate-  
 ly, as being both Gods, and their own  
 private, and that of all the world be-  
 sides, wherein to die a Martyr must  
 needs be Meritorious; not considering,  
 that the thing which they conceive to  
 be unjust, may notwithstanding be most  
 just and reasonable, and the errour  
 not in their Prince, but in their own  
 private Opinion and Judgment; and  
 not considering, that if the Prince did  
 pervert Justice, &c. yet those particu-  
 lar acts wherein he did so, would not  
 be of so bad a consequence to the Com-  
 monwealth, as the remedy they did at-  
 tempt, viz. a Civil War: which if so,  
 then are they themselves guilty of a  
 greater injustice, in bringing greater  
 calamities upon a Nation, to avoid the  
 lesser; and what greater calamity can  
 be then such a War?

Now the Constitution of the Com-  
 monwealth of *England* is such, that  
 besides the old Laws, approved by ma-  
 ny Ages of experience, no new Laws  
 binde the people, which are not, or  
 have not been ratified by their own  
 consent: The King therefore that is to  
 Rule

Rule according to those Laws, will certainly be more cautious in observing that they be put in execution, then if he were left at liberty, and unconfin'd and his own Imperial Commands or Edicts were only and singly to be accounted Law; the diversity betwixt such a Government as this of ours, and such a Tyrannical Government as Mr. *Hobbes* speaks of, being this: in ours, the people can say, We have agreed and submitted to such and such Laws and no other, and by these we desire to be ruled, and if you govern or handle us otherwise, you do us apparent wrong, and let God and your own Conscience judge betwixt us and you whether you observe, as you are oblig'd by the mutual Covenants and Engagements betwixt us and you: But in these absolute Monarchical Tyrannies, there is no such mutual compact or agreements betwixt the Sovereign and the People, no positive Laws but the Princes Command or Edict; and the people agreeing, or having agreed to be subject to such a kinde of Government, have no other will then that

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of their Prince; it being the same as if  
 they had said, *We submit our wills to  
 your will, and our selves to be wholly  
 governed according to your discretion; do  
 us what to you seems good, we and  
 all we have are yours, and you may di-  
 pose of us and ours as you think fit and  
 convenient; your only Edicts and Com-  
 mands shall be the absolute Laws to  
 which we willingly submit our selves, and  
 which shall be by us inviolable.*

This is the nature of Mr. Hobbes his  
 Monarchical Tyranny: Now let any  
 rational man judge, whether the Prince,  
 whose power, as to the just measure of  
 it, and how far it ought lawfully to be  
 extended, is known and determined,  
 and cannot without notorious injustice  
 and breach of Covenant be enlarged,  
 will not be more cautious in using the  
 same according to moderation and dis-  
 cretion, and containing himself with-  
 in the Sphere and extent of Justice and  
 Equity, then he who may, according  
 to the Laws of the Kingdom and Go-  
 vernment, and without seeming wrong  
 or injustice to his people, by reason of  
 their consent to his Arbitrary Govern-  
 ment,

ment, do what seems most agreeable  
 with his own fancies, however extra-  
 vagant and destructive to his people  
 in the first case, the sense of the appa-  
 rent injustice opens his eyes to the dan-  
 ger of such actions, and restrains his  
 irregular designs; in the latter, no  
 fault is committed the people by the  
 Laws of the Land can justly complain  
 of, or the Prince by any Law but Di-  
 vine, or natural Equity and Consci-  
 ence, know to be a fault; and there-  
 fore, I confess, no such pretence of In-  
 surrection or disobedience to the peo-  
 ple, nor sense of injury to them done  
 in the Prince: But it is most certain-  
 ly true, that with all bad Princes, the  
 fear of bringing mischief upon them-  
 selves from their wronged, and there-  
 by provoked, and at last enraged peo-  
 ple, is a great safety, and the best Shield  
 of the people to protect and secure  
 them from violence and injustice. And  
 when the Prince is by express Laws, by  
 Oath and Covenant with his people,  
 positively bound to the observation of  
 their established known Laws, which  
 without the general consent of the peo-

able are unalterable : Surely matters be-  
 coming thus reduced to a certainty, as to  
 the method and Laws of Government  
 and Justice, the people will, even in  
 the Princes own judgment, much sooner  
 apprehend and disgust irregular and  
 unjust proceedings, having a constant  
 Standard to measure them by, then  
 when all is referred only to the Princes  
 will and pleasure; where *quod libet li-*  
*cet, quod licet equum est*; and the Prince,  
 though he vie with all the Records  
 of History for all sorts of Tyranny and  
 Oppression, yet must be thought to do  
 no evil, or at least no wrong to his  
 poor Subjects; and this apprehension,  
 and doubt of the bad consequences  
 which will probably insue upon such  
 Tyrannical actions, is a great check to  
 Tyranny. And though the Doctrine be  
 admitted most certainly true, that for  
 no reason whatsoever any Subject  
 ought to take up Arms or wage War a-  
 gainst his Prince, no not to preserve  
 his own life, (which yet Mr. *Hobbes* al-  
 lows of) yet will this give no security  
 at all to the Tyrannical Governours; for  
 but few men in the world basie their  
 brains



brains to search out and apprehend the true reasons of things, as they ought, or are capable of so doing; and fewer will be content to sit still and suffer wrongfully (as they conceive) where there is good hopes of defending and vindicating themselves from wrong, let the wrong-doer be what he will. The number of those that will be dissatisfied with the just and lawful proceedings of a just Prince, doth often overpower their Fellows, who are good and loyal-hearted Subjects, as woful experience doth often teach: how much more ought it to be expected, that when the Prince doth, contrary to Justice, and the established Laws, abuse and Tyrannize over his Subjects, the number of the prudent Loyal, and lovers of peace, should be much inferiour to the number of Male-contents and Mutineers? And hence the danger arises that so often overtakes the Tyranny even of lawful Princes and Governours, and the fear that the Prince must necessarily stand in of falling by the number of his irritated and provoked Subjects, who conceive themselves wronged

wronged by him, will always put some restraint upon his extravagancy and Tyranny, let him be never so wicked, if he have but such an indifferent measure of prudence or consideration, as to respect his own safety and estate; so that the peoples sense of wrong, doth often conduce much to the securing them from much oppression under wicked Princes, as it doth often also bring great miseries and afflictions upon them under both good and bad Princes. To restrain which natural propensity that all men have of revenging themselves, even upon their Princes and Governours, though with the hazard of a whole Nation, where it lies in their power, for an injury done, or conceived to be done to them or theirs, though by their Prince; it is very reasonable and necessary that the Laws should be so severe as they are against Rebels and disturbers of the Peace; and yet for all this, all to little to curb the exuberancy of this disease: for though good effects may sometimes be the result of unlawful and irregular actings, yet such actings ought not therefore

to be allowed or approved, because such effects are but accidental, and not naturally incident to them; besides, we must not do evil that good may issue, but it seems a secret of Gods Providential contrivance, as in many other like cases, so in this, that the sins of the Prince, as Tyranny, &c. should be punished by the sins of his people, as Rebellion, &c. and so *vice versa*, the rebellious humour of the people to be punished by the heavy hand of the Prince, or some other Usurping Tyrant: Therefore, I say, where the Laws are made and established, and things reduced to as great a certainty as is possible, as to what is just or unjust, lawful and unlawful, both in respect of Subject and Prince, and one Subject and another; though the interpretation of these Laws, and the execution of them, be left solely to the Prince; yet is there much more hopes the people may enjoy some benefit of these Laws, than where there are no Laws so established, but all is left to the will and discretion of the Prince to make new, or revoke old, or do what he list: for a Prince that

will

such will pervert these Laws , after they are  
 so established , and he sworn to the ob-  
 servation of them , What would the  
 same Prince do if there were no such  
 Laws at all to stand in the way of his  
 will and desire ? certainly be much more  
 Irregular, Tyrannical, and Exorbitant.  
 Suppose the Kings of *England* had been  
 all actually Kings of *France* , or of the  
 Turkish Empire, to Rule there accord-  
 ing to the Custom of those Countries,  
 do you think those Countries of *France*,  
 and the Nations under the Dominion of  
 the Turk, thou'd have been used by the  
 same Kings with no less respect and re-  
 gard to the peoples satisfaction, and no  
 less Liberties , Immunities and Privi-  
 ledges allowed them , then to the En-  
 glish Subjects ? Or suppose the French  
 King, or the Turk, were to govern ac-  
 cording to the Laws and Constitutions  
 of *England* , amongst a people inured  
 to such a Government , do you think  
 that the people should presently under-  
 go as much servitude under them, as the  
 people they now Rule ? No certainly ;  
 the different Constitutions of Govern-  
 ment , though under the same men,

would alter the condition of the people that lived under those men and Governments, and the Princes be thereby and by the humour of the people, deterred from abusing them contrary to their Laws, with the same licentiousness they would their other Subjects. Hence it is clearly evinced, that good Laws established, as in *England*, are the immediate cause, under God, of the happiness, freedom, wealth and privileges, the people living under them as in *England*, enjoy above those other people and Nations of the world. And though, in other Countries, the Prince may have a more absolute Dominion and Arbitrary power, of doing or undoing whatsoever to him seems good, yet to a good Prince this is no manner of felicity, his satisfaction and contentment consisting chiefly in making his people under him live happily, and with the greatest assurance of the greatest immunities and privileges they may be capable of as Subjects; and therefore desires not to impose any thing upon them, but what is in order to this proposed end: For why is the Prince

aid to represent God, but because he  
 is to be as God to his people? whose  
 greatest Attribute wherein we impy him  
 being goodness, the advantage the  
 Prince hath above all others, is, as God,  
 to do good to so many people his Sub-  
 jects, and under the influence of his pow-  
 er. And certainly to any soul that is  
 divine *aure particula*, that carries in it  
 the Image of its Creator, the greatest  
 felicity in the world is to do good to  
 all, and oblige all by benefits and cour-  
 tesies, or at least to deserve well at the  
 hands of every the meanest subject or  
 person: for this is that which God  
 hath done of all his Creatures; and  
 those creatures which desire to resemble  
 their Creator, must do so by one another;  
 and that man, I think, ought always to  
 look upon it as a special favour of God,  
 and a great blessing, in whose hands God  
 hath been pleased to put the means and  
 opportunities to delight himself in this  
 pleasing God-like exercise of distribu-  
 ing happiness, and contentment, and  
 all the benefits of peace, plenty, riches,  
 honours, immunities, rewards, and o-  
 ther good things, to his inferiour Sub-

jects or Vassals; and that man who findes no satisfaction in thus acting the part of God towards his fellow-creatures, or rather whose greatest and chiefeſt ſatisfaction and pleaſure is not herein found to conſiſt (for *omnium ſuaviſſime delitiæ ſunt obligandi delitiæ*) hath no part of God, nor no reſemblance of him: And let him pretend to what other vertues, excellencies or perfections he will, they all loſe their luſtre without this one Noble qualification, which is their end; and he thus deſtitute of this ennobling perfection of the Soul, which is the light thereof, he reſembles no more the light which is God, but darkneſs his contrary.

But it may be objected againſt what I have ſaid, that the people under thoſe abſolute Monarchs by Mr. *Hobbes* deſcribed, being their Slaves and Vassals, and all they have theirs in Law and Juſtice, freely to diſpoſe of according to their high Prerogatives, the Prince will be more careful, in this caſe, of preſerving his own, then he would otherwiſe be if the people challenged; and had abſolute propriety in their eſtates.

goods



goods and possessions, and a free disposal of themselves, and all they had, without being liable, or obliged by any Laws or Commands, but those by themselves expressly made or consented to; for the Prince being as Master of the Family, will be more careful of the Family, and all that appertains to it, looking upon all as his own proper goods, then if he were but a Guardian and Overseer for anothers benefit.

To this I answer, That it were happy for many men, Masters of Families, both in respect of themselves and their Families, if they had not power to waste their substance, ruine their estates, and be a continual affliction and vexation to all those that are necessarily dependant upon them, in some sense their poor Subjects and Vassals: And how many examples have we of this nature? Is it not the most common and ordinary thing in the world, to see the Son scatter what the Father hath scraped together; and by his folly and extravagancy, totally destroy all the Monuments of his Fathers frugality, wisdom and industry? And how many families every day fall

to ruine ; and from a plentiful estate, are reduced to beggery, or a very low and mean condition, by the misgovernment of the *Pater-familia's* ? How few Ancient Families, of many thousands, have continued their Hereditary Estates and Grandeur from the first Foundation of this Kingdom, or but from the last settlement of it under the Norman ? And how many times have the best of them been shaken, and reduced to a low and very weak estate, only by the exorbitancy of their own heads ? If Kings then were as Masters of Families, and governed after the same manner, as freely and arbitrarily disposing of all the Profits and Revenues of the Nation, and the labours of the people; what man is so blinde, as not to see that Kingdoms would be things of no firmer foundation, nor longer continuance, at least under one and the same form of Government, and Race of Princes, then Families are, or the Estates appertaining to these Families continue under, and in the hands of the same Lineal Masters, whereof one in a hundred doth not continue its felicity a hundred years

years together ; but is without any other default or cause then that of the Governour, or *Pater Familia*'s thereof, reduced to the greatest extremities, and in some respect annihilated ? Where is then this care that each man hath of his own Proprieties ? And certainly Kings being but men as others are, and challenging from nature no more nor greater abilities either of minde or body, if they might without opposition, and with as much facility, dispose of their Kingdoms and people, as a Master of a Family of his Estate, many of them being guilty of the same extravagancies other men are, would make both their own Grandeur, and their peoples Fortunes, subject to the same incertainties, periods and vicissitudes, that ordinary Families are ; with this diversity, that a Master of a Family having not so absolute a power, is not able to do so much mischief. If it be further objected, that many of those Tyrannical Kingdoms, as that of the ancient and present Persian Monarchy, the Turkish, Indian, and others, are or have been of long continuance : I answer, That

even these, however they seem to be absolutely Tyrannical, yet *de facto* they are not so. For in the first place, each of these Countries hath its Religion established and certain, besides Customs, which arbitrarily to alter, is not in the power of any the greatest Princes amongst them. Secondly, though the Princes may, according to the Customs of some of those Countries, by their high Prerogative, and without infringing any positive Laws, take away the estate or life of any the greatest Subject without any legal proceeding, or good cause shewn, or real guilt (contrary to the Laws here with us) and to often do; yet is it not in their power to change the Souls of men, and make them approve and like well of such injustice and wrong. Hence it is, that further then their absolute power maintain'd by the strength of a Military force will uphold them to exercise these Tyrannical actions, they neither can nor dare do them; but the awe of the Souldiery, whose interest such Princes have commonly linked with their own arbitrary Dominion, and whose advan-

tage usually arises out of the oppression  
 of the people; and the custom where-  
 by the people have been inured to such  
 subjection, makes many such oppressi-  
 ons and tyrannies to pass with less op-  
 position or disturbance: But then is  
 not this Prince so arbitrary in his Go-  
 vernment as is supposed; for he can do  
 nothing but what shall be liked and ap-  
 proved of by his Army or Souldiery,  
 with whom he must always carry fair,  
 oblige, gratify, and please them; and  
 even they, further then their own inte-  
 rest doth byas and incline them, will  
 never be drawn to countenance and  
 maintain open injustice, injury and op-  
 pression; and the Prince is himself in  
 the power of these, by whose power he  
 tyrannizes over his people; and that it  
 is so, is often experienced, they casting  
 him off upon any displeasure concei-  
 ved, and setting up who they please.  
 But by reason it hath been usual with  
 the Subjects of such Princes to be thus  
 tyrannized over, being well acquainted  
 with the irregular proceedings of their  
 Prince, and the power of his Armies,  
 and having no established Laws but his  
 will,

will, nor no pretence of any Law to defend them, or interpose against such wrongs, but only *extrema necessitas*, or *Lex Naturæ*; they are content to bear much, and much more then will those people, who being inured to another manner of Government, and having positive established Laws, do no less impatiently indure the breach or infringement of those their Countries Laws and priviledges, though but lightly touching their estates, persons or conveniencies, then the others do the greatest extremities of tyranny and oppression. Hence it is, that in such Tyrannical Governments the Prince having inured the people to suffer a far greater measure of wrong, hardship and slavery, then in some other places they have been acquainted withal, may with more safety, and less danger of provoking them, continue the same, then another Prince commanding a freer people, and better acquainted with more liberty, and good usage, may reduce them to suffer from him a far lighter measure of injustice: which if a good Prince, he will never desire to do nor attempt; if

a bad, I see not why any man should desire, that he should finde an easie and uninterrupted path to help to go more chearfully, and with greater facility, to the execution of his bad designs, in oppressing and grinding his people, and making their lives unpleasant and uncomfortable. Yet if any man could convince me, that the people were made only for the Prince, and not the Prince for the people, I could perhaps be more easily induced to think, that every thing that made the way more plain and open for the more absolute Dominion of the Prince; and the most absolute slavery of the Subject, were to be made a part of our Creed: But this is a Doctrine no well-advised man methinks should ever desire to set on foot, nor no wise or good Prince would ever make any use of, his peoples greatest assurance of a happy estate under his Government being his own greatest glory and content: And though he himself may be good, and therefore need no restrictive Laws to limit him his actions; yet he knows not what his Successors may prove, or how fit or unfit to  
be



be trusted with so great and arbitrary a power; and therefore is well contented to give the people all the security he can, which may be consistent with his and their safety, for injoying themselves and their estates, in the best manner that Subjects can be capable of, without desiring that all should be arbitrary, and depend on'y upon the will and tancy of him that shall sit in the Royal Seat; which is that which Mr. Hobbes will needs make Essential to it: For, saith he, in his Book *de Cive*, *The rules of good and evil, just and unjust, honest and dishonest, are Civil Laws; and therefore what the Law-giver commands is to be taken for good, what he forbids for evil.* And again, *Before Empires there was no such thing as just or unjust; therefore Lawful Kings make those things which they command just, by commanding of them; and what they forbid, by forbidding of them, they make them unjust; and a Subject cannot sin in obeying his Prince.* If this should be all taken for Gospel by all the world, as Mr. Hobbes would have it, there needs no more then the Succession of a bad Prince or two in each several

several Nation, to destroy the Generation of Mankind from off the earth. What brave sport would some of those Roman Emperours, as *Nero, Caligula, &c.* have made, if all their Subjects would have been so exactly obedient to their Commands? Yet in some cases Mr. *Hobbes* will allow the Subject to deny Obedience to his Prince; For, saith he soon after, *We must not obey the Prince, if he command us to dishonour God, or not to worship him; for to dishonour him, or not to worship him, can be by none understood for any manner of worship: Nor had any one, before the Constitution of a Civil Government, the Right to deny honour due to God, and therefore could not transfer such Right upon the Civil Power.* Well then, Mr. *Hobbes* grants the Law-giver is not always to be obeyed: When is it then lawful to disobey? saith Mr. *Hobbes*, When he commands us directly to dishonour God, or not to worship him. And why may we not dishonour God, or not worship him? Sure, I think, for no other cause, but because it is directly contrary to the light of Reason: Therefore

fore by consequence, whensoever the Law-giver commands us any thing directly contrary to the light of Reason, we are not obliged to obey, according to Mr. *Hobbes* his Concession; and such are all Commands contrary to the Laws of Nature, viz. Justice, Charity, Temperance, &c. as hath been shewn. But Mr. *Hobbes* will say, such Commands must be directly contrary to the Light of Reason, and not by consequence only. I will not trouble myself with the meaning of this distinction, but affirm, that whatsoever is by a clear consequence contrary, is directly contrary to reason; and even, according to Mr. *Hobbes*, the Subject, in this case, is necessarily to be Judge himself, whether the thing be directly contrary to reason or not which is commanded. And whereas Mr. *Hobbes* saith, *That no man before the Constitution of a Civil Government had the right to deny honour due to God, and therefore could not transfer such right upon the Civil Magistrate, and therefore may deny obedience*: I have likewise already proved, that before the Constitution of a Civil Government,

vernment, these Laws of Nature, Justice, Charity and Temperance, were obligatory, and no man had any right to break them, or dispence with them; and therefore neither, in these cases, could transfer any such right upon the Civil Magistrate. But sure Mr. *Hobbes* had forgot his definition of the Law of Nature, when he said, *We must not obey the Prince, if he command us to dishonour God*: For a Prince may command such a thing on penalty of life, and then the very Law of Nature gives us a right to save our lives, which is with him *Suprema Lex*.

Having thus spoke to the concerns of men, in respect of this life, let us look a little, or rather a great way further; that is, to his concerns after this life is ended, to all Eternity; and by the same principle, whereby actions relating to our present estate are guided and directed, by the same is that also, viz. *Philantia*, self-love or self-preservation, taken in a more liberal sense; for God himself hath made that the great business of every intelligent rational being (as hath been before intimated)

ted) and by his infinite and gracious wisdom and goodness, hath made those actions which most conduce to that end of self-preservation, to be the same with what his own Eternal, and also late Laws have appointed and directed to be done: So that insisting in that path, and closely pursuing that end, we shall infallibly please our great Creator, and do those things which are consonant and agreeable to his will, and his very Nature and Essence (as we ought to believe) for seeing he is good infinitely, and wise infinitely, out of his infinite goodness and wisdom he hath conjoynd our interest with our duty; for certainly we could never have thought that goodness in God, according to the notion we necessarily frame to our selves of goodness, which should have made our interest inconsistent with his will, and where in endeavouring our own felicity we should have crossed his Laws: Therefore (as hath been said) we ought to believe, that God out of his wisdom and goodness hath closely conjoynd and united our interest, happiness and felicity, to all Eternity

Eternity, with his own glory, his good will and pleasure, his own Eternal Laws of goodness and wisdom; which then we shall be sure most closely to pursue and follow, when we most closely pursue our own interest, our own real happiness and felicity: and this being granted, confirms and establishes those fore-mentioned Laws of Justice, Charity and Temperance, &c. without which it is impossible for men to live securely or comfortably in this life; without which there can be no Civil Society; and without which the Generation of Mankind must of necessity, in short time, be destroyed, and perish from off the earth: Therefore it ought to be concluded by all, that Justice, Charity and Temperance, &c. are things in themselves absolutely good, because absolutely requisite and necessary both to our well being, and the very being of all future Generations, and so strictly to be observed, even according to the Law of Nature: and whatsoever Religion or Opinion crosses or impugnes these Laws, confutes it self.

This being proved before, let's consider

der what Religion ought to be established in a Commonwealth: for though Justice, Charity and Temperance, and some other Vertues, be granted to make a necessary part of it; yet may other matters be admitted, no less necessary, in some respects, so as they be not inconsistent with these: and herein are men at a great loss, and a mighty stir is made in the world, and not without reason; for seeing Religion is that which respects our eternal happiness and well being, no wise man but will think himself therein more concern'd, then in all the comforts and conveniencies of this short life; so as he will rather chuse to lose all those benefits and advantages, together with life it self, then lose himself eternally.

Now certainly, that Religion which hath the best foundation in Reason and Authority to ground it self upon, ought by any reasonable man to be chosen; and that the Christian Religion is such, hath sufficiently been proved by the Learned Pens and Arguments of many great and wise men; and that it is not only consistent with, but strictly injoyns



joyns the observation of those great Laws of Justice, Charity and Temperance, &c. we all know and acknowledge: And that the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, are the Books wherein this Religion of ours is fully comprehended and taught, or at least that all that is in them comprehended is true and authentick, is generally agreed to by most that profess Christianity; only the several Comments upon the Text, the various Expositions of men, who differ in their Opinions and Judgments, is the great occasion of that confusion that is amongst us, and the great differences about Religions; all pretending to ground their Tenents upon equal Authorities of Scripture: for where it is agreed on all hands, that the concerns of the life which is to come, are to be preferred before this present, as being of infinite greater and larger consequence, because relating to our eternal good or bad estate; Hence it is most clear and evident, that according to the Laws and Rules of Self-love, or Self-preservation, every man is obliged to  
do

do those things that may assure, or secure unto him his future everlasting happiness; and for no consideration, regard, or respect of any temporary or transitory pain, penalty, pleasure or profit, to lose or hazard the loss of himself, as to his future estate: And although, according to the same Laws, he ought only to pursue those steps that lead directly towards this end of a future eternal happiness, without treading awry, or erring to the right hand or the left; yet because no man is infallible, but each one subject to many failings and errours, in point of judgment as well as otherwise, all that can be done, is only for every man to do that which in his own judgment and reason he shall conceive the aptest means to this end, praying Gods assistance; and to him referring the event: and the dictates and determinations of this judgment and reason of his, is that which he calls his Conscience; which though certainly in many things erroneous and mistaken, yet seeing that to him it appears otherwise, he must needs think himself obliged to observe and pursue the

the resolutions thereof; and therefore looking still upon the End, Eternal happiness, unto which his Conscience, as he conceives, directs him the true way, though perhaps in truth very erroneously and deceitfully; he is no less zealous in prosecuting these fallacious paths, pointed out to him by his ill-discerning Conscience, then if they were really the true ways. Nor is he to be blamed for doing that which he conceives the aptest means to the justly desired end he aims at, but for misconceiving that to be an apt means, which is not: Therefore the best remedy to avoid the great mischiefs that happen upon such misapprehensions, and conscientious errors, is for each man to lay aside that high conceit he hath of himself, and to put off his pride and prejudice, and retain but a moderate esteem of his own judgment, as easily misled and abused; and to consider with himself, that seeing there are so many different Opinions concerning one and the same thing, both in point of Religion, and other matters; and that all those who differ in Opinion from himself, and from one another,

another, are men, and therefore, upon that account, equal to himself; and though some inferiour, yet other perhaps superiour to him in reason and knowledge. Hereupon he ought humbly with himself to conceive, that it is no less probable he himself may be mistaken, and his Conscience misled and abused, then some one of his Fellows: For methinks it is high arrogance and presumption, for any the wisest man upon earth, to suppose all his own Opinions infallible truths: And though *clara*, and *distincta perceptio*, according to *Des Chartes*, be a great and strong testimony for the truth of the thing conceived; yet men will deceive themselves with a firm belief that they have that clear and distinct perception of the truth of a thing, when to other mens judgments, and even in truth and reality, they are in a manifest and apparent error, and are afterwards themselves convinced of it; and a firm belief that a thing is so as the party doth conceive it, though not grounded upon sound reason, nor upon the evidence of a clear and distinct percep-

perception, but only upon fancy, enthusiasms, misconceit, ignorance or prejudice, is no less strong to over-rule and determine the affection, and even the minde and judgment it self, then the evidence and demonstration of the most infallible truths, grounded upon the clearest perception the minde of man is capable of: So that a mans firm belief, and unshaken confidence of the truth of a thing, though in the highest degree imaginable, is no sound argument to prove that he is not in an error. Let therefore every one consider his Neighbour as no less desirous of that happiness he is in pursuit of then himself, and to have a Soul, with Reason, Judgment and Conscience, equal with himself. No man will scruple to say, this Neighbour of his is mistaken in his judgment, and abused with false Doctrines and Principles of Religion: and in reason, why may not you who are so censorious of another, be as worthy of censure your self? especially if you have no better Warrant for your Opinions, then the charitable belief you have ever had of your own, or your own Sects abilities,

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bilities to judge of the truth; which in reality are no more nor greater, perhaps inferior to that of your Neighbours, whom you condemn: So that if you will set aside this over-balance of self-conceit, which only gives you the advantage, in your own Opinion, to any other indifferent Judge, there is perhaps as much, or a greater probability, you are in an error, then your Neighbour; or else that both are mistaken. Let every man therefore suspend his zeal, and look to the grounds of his Conscience, without prejudice, pride, and self-conceit; examine them over and over again, especially let him try them by the Touch-stone of these three Cardinal Vertues, of Justice, Charity, Temperance, and what others right reason dictates, and if after all this it will speak no other Language but what it did before, I say, then he ought at least in conscience to proceed in his own ways, though he afterwards may finde, perhaps too late, his Conscience but a vain Opinion, and ill-grounded surmise: for his Conscience being the same with his judgment, it is evident, that  
 this

this often failing and abusing him in many easie and familiar matters, subject even to the tryal of his outward senses, or in points of his Calling, wherein with reason he may pretend to the greatest skill; it must be great presumption in him to be so peremptory, and lay so great weight and stress upon it in things of a higher nature, and of a more speculative and curious knowledge, unless he have cultivated his minde with those Sciences and Studies that may inable him the better to discern betwixt truth and error; which is the greatest and most difficult; though the most Noble and Excellent Art in the world; yet in its highest perfection and improvement, far from making any man infallible: and though every mans Conscience, that is, his own private judgment and opinion, ought and must necessarily be his Guide; yet sound judgment will advise, that in some things we should prefer another mans judgment before our own, especially in matters wherein we have reason to believe he hath great skill and knowledge, and better then we our selves; as in



matters of his Calling, whereunto we may be strangers, and never versed or instructed in the things appertaining to it: and therefore a Learned Divine, or the greatest Scholar, will rather relye upon, and admit of his Taylers judgment, for cutting out a suit of Cloaths, and his Shoo-makers for making him a good pair of Shooes, then presume upon his own; and herein he ceaseth not still to follow the dictamens of his own private judgment, which he thinks fit, in these cases, with good reason, to submit and accommodate to that of others: Why should not therefore every Mechanick, with the same humility, submit to the Opinion of the Learned, in points of Learning; and to their Exposition of the Scripture, in Scripture-Interpretation; whose business, study and calling is conversant about, and doth make him a Professor of such knowledge? and if to the Opinion of one, much more to the Opinion of all the most Learned and Judicious of a whole Nation, being confirmed and owned by Publick Authority.

But still if Conscience cannot be perswaded

swaded to this, you will say, Conscience must not be wounded and forced, we must not drive, but lead her gently: For if my Conscience tell me this is a sin, it is no excuse before the Judge of Hearts, in committing this which I really conceive to be a sin, to say it is allowed of by the Commonwealth, a Convocation of Divines, or by the Parson of the Parish; but it appearing to me a sin, and I supposing it to be such, in giving way to it condemn my self, and am left inexcuseable: therefore Conscience must not be violated; and every man will think himself obliged to act still according to the dictates and suggestions of his own Conscience, let all the Laws of the World, Humane or Divine, say what they will: for that hath only the power and influence to work upon a mans Conscience, which he himself conceives to be Law.

Hence it is manifest, that every man in the world that hath any regard to Religion, or a future estate, will desire Liberty of Conscience; that is, that he may do any thing that in his own private judgment and Opinion he con-

ceives the aptest means to attain a future Eternal happiness; and as far as such a future happiness is to be preferred above temporary transitory things, so far will he think himself obliged by that Principle of Self-love, to prefer the free exercise of his Religion, the means to this happiness, before life it self, or all the concerns of life. But in the mean time, each man I think will grant, that in reason he ought to consider others as equal with himself; and that according to the Eternal Laws of Justice and Charity, as he desires a Liberty of Conscience for himself, he ought to allow the same Liberty of Conscience to all other men, who for the same reasons, and upon as good grounds as he, *viz.* upon the account of their Eternal Estate, think themselves, and are as much as he also, obliged to follow the suggestions of their own consciences or judgments, in order to attain that great proposed end of Felicity. This being granted, the consequence thereof must of necessity be a dissolution of all Civil Government, where the consciences of men, as in these present times, do put them

them upon such different ways and means of accomplishing this proposed end, as are absolutely inconsistent, and cannot be allowed, without interfering and crossing one another, both in principles and practise.

But however, if you will have Liberty of Conscience granted to any, then certainly the Supreme Authority of the Nation must not be deprived of this Liberty which every private man doth contend for, and thinks of right to belong to himself: This certainly were great injustice and wrong; yet this being once allowed, there is no more liberty left for any Subject, other than what is consistent with that of the Publick. But you will say, the publick Authority ought to take such a course, as every man may have his liberty, at least so far as is consistent with the Civil Government. I grant it; but then must the publick Authority be Judge in this case, viz. what Liberty may be or is consistent with the Civil Government, and not every private person. Moreover, seeing the Supreme Magistrate is to have Liberty of Conscience, which

I think cannot with reason be denied, so far as<sup>d</sup> is consistent with the Laws of the Land, and the Religion by them established. Let us suppose, as we well may and ought, that he thinks himself obliged in Duty and Conscience, in point of Justice and Charity, to take no less care for the future, than present good estate of his people: Hence it will necessarily follow, that he ought to use all lawful means to suppress all Religions, Sects and Opinions, which he conceives to be Heretical and Erronious, and contrary to the National established way of Worship; and what in him lies, to propagate that which he himself conceives to be the true; and unto the observance and defence whereof, he is not only by his private Conscience, but publick Ingagement obliged: For he who sees another man in his Opinion blinde, and going directly upon a Pit, or Precipice, where he shall be sure to pitch upon his own death, is very much too blame if he do not hinder him from running thus foolishly to destruction, though the other party exclaim against him, because he will not  
suffer

suffer him to go forward upon a certain death : How much more they shall he fail, in point of Charity and Duty, who seeing men run upon their own Eternal death, by slipping into Errours and Heresies, shall not indeavour to relieve and recal them, or at least hinder them from drawing the rest of mankind after them, into the same Gulphs of misery and perdition, by suppressing and hindring the growth and propagation of these Errours ; more especially where bearing the Sovereign Power, that Office lays a duty and obligation upon him, by his particular relation to his Subjects, to be careful of all their concerns ?

And hereby it appears, that whosoever will set up for Liberty of Conscience for himself, seeing he can in Justice and equity do no less then allow that liberty to others, as well as desire it for himself, and consequently to the Sovereign Magistrate ; this man immediately, and *ipso facto*, hereby deprives himself of all liberty, more then what the Law of the Land will allow him : for the Conscience of the Magistrate in-

joyning him to be as careful of the Souls of his Subjects, and their future estates, as of their bodies, and their temporal welfare, he can do no less, according to Conscience, then use the means and power that is in his hands, according to the Laws of the Land, to suppress all Religions but the true one; that is, that which he himself, as Supreme Head, hath judged so to be, by obliging himself to defend and conserve the same according to the Laws of the Land. And if you will exclaim against him for doing so, it is without any reason: For having allowed the Proposition, that every man ought to have Liberty of Conscience, and by his Conscience to regulate his actions; you ought not to accuse him who assumes this liberty of acting according to his Conscience, though it impugnes yours: for to say, he acts not according to his Conscience, or that his Conscience is erroneous or wicked, and therefore not to be a rule to others, is to take upon you, in the first case, to know that which only God can know, the heart of man; or in the second, to presume to make your own Conscience the

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the Standard of Truth, to measure anothers by: So that the liberty you contend for, is only a liberty to set up, and idolize your own judgment and fancy, above all the world besides. And hereby it is evident, that Liberty of Conscience, other then what is allowed by the National or Civil Power or Authority, is not a thing to be desired; or if taken, will certainly dissolve and bring to ruine all Civil Government; and that man who cannot with a safe conscience submit to the Government in being, whether in a Kingdom, or any other Species of Government, I think his wisest way were to go to some such place or Country, where he may freely enjoy his own way of worships; and if no such can be found, then let him again consider, what kinde of Religion he hath gotten, that drives him from the society of mankind: But for every man to think himself highly wronged, because he may not be suffered to set up a Religion according to his own fancy or conscience, is to offer the greatest wrong to all his Fellows, who may with as much Justice lay claim to the same privilege;

viledge ; and then will it be impossible for any Civil Government to take place or continue , where every man may be allowed the liberty to do what seems good in his own eyes , without respect to the established Laws : for who knows, or rather, who knows not, to what extravagancies mens consciences, or hypocritical wicked men , under pretence of Conscience ( which is the same ) are often carried ? and therefore Liberty in this kinde is necessarily to be restrain'd within certain bounds and limits , of which the Supreme Authority ought only to be Judge.

*Object.* And now having through all these several discourses adhered so closely to the Law of Self-preservation , or Self-love , perhaps some will hence take occasion to say, this selfish Principle is base, and unworthy a Christian , nay even a generous Heathen ; our duty to God, and respect to the universal good of all mankind, being things to be preferred before all self-ends.

*Answer.* They who have well considered what I have said before , will save me the trouble of answering this Objection,

jection, and be able to do it themselves. and to the rest I say again, for I have said as much before, Our duty to God, and respect to the general good of mankind, are things inseparable from our interest; there being nothing so absolutely necessary to our well-being, as to do our duties to our Creator, and to do good to our Fellow-creatures, which is commanded by the Law of Nature, and by the example of God himself; whereby, in imitation of him, in all things to be imitated, and into a shadow of whose perfections we are to endeavour to form and model our selves, as far as our natures are capable of it, we are obliged and enjoined to do good to all; which indeed is not only our duties upon the aforesaid accounts, but is also one of the most pleasing and delightful things to all good dispositions, and well-tempered spirits, that can be conceived or imagined, and they little better then Devils that are of a contrary sense and judgment. But if you will urge me further, and say, Suppose those duties we owe to God and our Neighbours were really disunited from

from our interest, what were then to be done? I say, the very supposition is wicked, and injurious both to God and man; for it is as much as if we should suppose God could cease to be, or be otherwise then good, an Attribute and Perfection inseparable from his Nature: For certainly it could never be judged goodness in God, but its contrary, to make our duties to himself, and our Neighbours, inconsistent with our interest. I speak not here of petty worldly ends and advantages, which some base-minded men account their only interest; but that I account our interest which is eternally so, and upon which our future estate and happiness to all Eternity doth depend; and whatsoever is a means conducing to that end, and that only, I account our interest; and if others will interpose it, it is to be at their perils.

If after all this it be objected still, that if we permit every private man to be Judge of good and evil, just and unjust, right and wrong, and that every man doth and must of necessity govern himself, and direct his actions according to his own private judgment and  
con-

conscience, in order to his well-being; it must necessarily follow, that many mens private Opinions ( as Experience teaches us every day ) will make them refractory and disobedient to the Prince, and may be a cause of Rebellion, Sedition and War.

I answer, It hath been ever so since the World began, and ever will be so till all mens private judgments jump in one: Nor is there any remedy for this mischief, as I conceive, but what I have already mentioned, *viz.* to persuade men to lay aside pride, prejudice and self-conceit, and be well advised before they oppose their private Opinions to the publick, and the common remedy, which is, that he who hath so great, and probably over-weening Opinion of his own private judgment and conscience, as to oppose them against the Publick Authority, he doth it, at his own peril, and is obnoxious to the Law; which if he think it more for his true interest and happiness to oppose, then submit to, he doth but observe the Rule of Self-love, or Self-preservation in so doing; and he cannot do other-

otherwise (unless he could alter his Opinion of the means in order to that end) the greatest seeming good being always most prevailing with the judgment to determine it : For it is impossible for any man to renounce or resigne the power of determining himself what is good and evil , and absolutely to be therein governed by another mans judgment, if he act rationally; the understanding not being otherwise to be determined, but by an apparent good; and where several apparent goods offer themselves , the understanding must necessarily be swayed by that which appears to be the greatest : and it is impossible for any man to make whatsoever another man pleases to call so , to seem to his reason and judgment an apparent good, or the greatest apparent good ; even as much as it is impossible for any man to believe black to be white , or white black , pain pleasure, or pleasure pain, or that two is a greater number then three , only because another man bids him believe them to be so : And therefore that we should all believe the Commands of the Civil Magistrate

Magistrate to be the only Rule of good and evil, is not only unreasonable and destructive to Humane Society (as hath been shewed) but also impossible, unless a man could believe what he listed: yet still so long as we all agree that such disobedience in the Subject to the Civil Magistrate, is punishable according to the Laws ordained, though private conscience put men upon such acts of disobedience, the Government may remain firm enough, whilst every private man satisfies the Law, either by active or passive obedience, obeying, or suffering for his disobedience: and if the Laws against such Dissenters as cannot be allowed or tolerated with safety in a Civil Government be strictly executed, men will be well advised of the grounds upon which they refuse obedience to Authority, before they thrust their fingers into the fire.

**F I N I S.**



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